



Patent
Attorney's Docket No. P1219:041

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of)
Daniel E. ROSE et al)
Application No.: 08/231,656)
Filed: April 25, 1994) Group Art Unit: 2307
For: SYSTEM FOR DIRECTING)
RELEVANCE-RANKED DATA) Examiner: C. Lewis
OBJECTS TO COMPUTER USERS)

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

RECEIVED

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

APR 16 1997

Sir:

In the Office Action dated January 13, 1997, claims 5-27 were allowed, which Applicants note with appreciation, and claims 1-4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 as being anticipated by the newly cited Schell et al patent. The rest of the pending claims were not addressed in the Office Action. In this regard, the Examiner's attention is drawn to claims 28-39, which were added in the Amendment filed November 1, 1995, and initially considered in the Office Action dated February 8, 1996.

In any event, since claims 28-33 depend from claim 5, it is assumed that these claims are allowable. Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that claims 34-39 are allowable over the cited prior art, for the reasons presented below with respect to the rejection of claims 1-4.

As discussed in Applicants' previous responses, the present invention is directed to an information access system that is designed to enhance the flow of information within a community. This objective is achieved by ranking the likely degree of interest of the

available items of information in accordance with a user profile, and then presenting the items of information to the user in order of ranking. As a further feature of the invention, the user is provided with a mechanism for indicating his or her interest in each item of information that is retrieved. When the user does so, the user's indication is factored into his or her stored profile. Thus, in the system of the present invention, the user can select items of information that initially have a relatively low ranking and, by indicating an interest in those items, modify the stored profile so that similar types of items will subsequently have a higher relative ranking.

In contrast, the Schell et al patent is not directed to an information access system which stores user profiles, nor which presents information to the user in a ranking consistent with such profiles. Rather, the Schell et al patent is directed to an interactive television system. In a system of this type, the user is presented with a generic menu, such as that shown in Figure 5, via which the user can choose a particular service to be provided. In other words, in the interactive television system of the Schell et al patent, all of the choices pertaining to the services, particularly their order of importance, are made by the user. There is no storage of a user profile, nor ordered presentation of services to the user in accordance with such a profile.

With reference to the subject matter of claim 1, the Office Action identifies item 104, shown in Figure 2 of the Schell et al patent, as a means for storing a user profile. It is respectfully submitted, however, that the patent does not disclose such subject matter. Rather, as set forth at column 3, lines 55-57, item 104 is a data cache which is described

as being a large random access memory for storing audio and video material in compressed and packetized form. This audio and video material is the information that is provided in response to user selections. Thus, rather than being a means for storing a user profile which contains information about user preferences, the data cache 104 is more analogous to a database of information items that are available to be presented to users of the system. It is respectfully submitted that the Schell et al patent does not disclose, nor otherwise suggest, the concept of storing a user profile.

Further in this regard, the Schell et al patent does not disclose the ranking of available items of information in accordance with a user profile. With respect to this claimed subject matter, the Office Action refers to items 804, 810, 812 and 814, illustrated in Figure 8 of the Schell et al patent. It is respectfully submitted, however, that these items do not perform the function of, nor otherwise relate to, the ranking of items of information according to relevance or likely degree of interest. Rather, the items illustrated in Figure 8 constitute the elements of a data structure that is used to represent an FSM hierarchy of the type depicted in Figure 6. See, for example, column 11, lines 33-57 of the Schell et al patent. There is no suggestion in this portion of the patent, or elsewhere, that this data structure is involved in ranking elements of information pursuant to a user profile.

From the foregoing, it is believed to be apparent that the interactive television system disclosed in the Schell et al patent is not the same as, nor otherwise related to, the information access system of the present invention. Among other distinctions, the

interactive television system of the Schell et al patent does not operate on the basis of stored user profiles, particularly for the purpose of ranking the likely degree of interest in each of a number of available items of information in accordance with user profiles, and presenting the items of information in accordance with those profiles. Rather, in the interactive television system, various types of services are only provided to the user in response to active selection of those services by the user.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the Schell et al patent does not anticipate the subject matter of claims 1-4. For similar reasons, claims 34-39 are likewise submitted to be patentable over the cited prior art.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-4, and allowance of all claims pending in the application are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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